



Educated Citizenry 2020

Final Report presented to the General Assembly

December 2010

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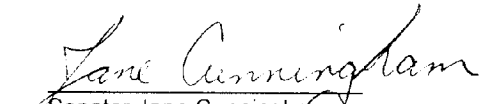
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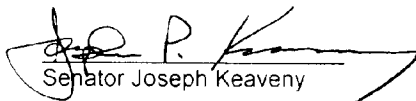
To All Senators:

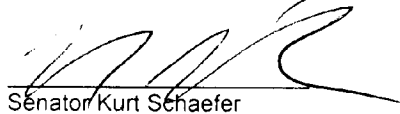
We are pleased to present the final report of the Educated Citizenry 2020 Committee as established under Senate Resolution 304 (2009).

Respectfully submitted,


Senator David Pearce, Chair


Senator Jane Cunningham


Senator Joseph Keaveny


Senator Kurt Schaefer


Senator Wes Shoemaker


Senator Robin Wright-Jones

Executive Summary

The Committee's vision of an educated citizen is a person who is fully able to participate in a democratic society, who has a passion for lifelong learning, and who is prepared with the skills and knowledge necessary to achieve his or her life's goals.

The Committee recommends the following benchmarks:

First, Missouri's kindergarteners will enter school with the essential skills and knowledge to be successful in their learning.¹

Second, 75% of Missouri students in every school district will demonstrate proficiency on the state's standardized achievement measure. In addition, Missouri students will perform at comparable levels to the highest performing industrialized countries on international, standardized measures.

Third, Missouri will increase attainment of postsecondary degrees and credentials to 60% for all adults, which will be supported in part by an increase in retention rates in higher education.

Educated Citizenry 2020 drew upon public testimony and presentations from education professionals to help shape the vision for education. Through this work, the Committee developed its recommendations around five major themes:

Access

- Fully-accredited schools for all students.
- Technology in the delivery of education at all levels.

Accountability

- Accountability to high academic standards for all public schools.
- Expanded opportunities for charter school sponsorship.
- Alternatives to the traditional school day and calendar year.

Teacher Quality

- Performance-based teacher compensation.
- Market-driven teacher compensation.

School Readiness

- Kindergarten readiness standards.
- Voluntary prekindergarten.²

¹ There was not unanimous consensus among the Committee members on this issue. Please see p.7 for the dissenting opinion

² See footnote 1.

Governance

- Funding formula seminar for new legislators.
- Annual education stakeholders meeting.
- Efficiency with resources in K-12 and higher education.
- Collaboration between school districts and higher education institutions.
- State-level P-20 governance structure.

The recommendations included in this report provide a starting point from which to begin realizing Missouri's long-range vision for education.

Table of Contents

| | Page |
|--|------|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Objective | 1 |
| Vision Statement and Benchmarks | 1 |
| Priorities of the Committee | 2 |
| Synthesis of Public Testimony | 3 |
| Urban Education | 4 |
| Conclusions and Recommendations | 5 |
| Appendix A – Public Hearing Information | 9 |
| Appendix B – Public Hearing Witness List | 10 |
| Appendix C – Participants and Presenters – Informational Meeting | 11 |

The Educated Citizenry 2020 Committee would like to thank the following schools and institutions for serving as meeting hosts:

University of Central Missouri, Warrensburg
Confluence Academy, St. Louis
Metropolitan Community College, Kansas City
St. Louis Community College

Introduction

In his opening address at the First Regular Session of the Ninety-Fifth General Assembly in January 2009, Senate President Pro Tem Charlie Shields announced the creation of three committees charged with setting a long-range vision for Missouri in three critical areas: education, healthcare, and economic development. Since then, the Educated Citizenry 2020 Committee has worked to develop objectives to support quality education for Missouri students at all levels. (See Appendix A for public hearing information.) In this report, the Committee has identified goals and actions necessary to realize this vision.

Objective

The Committee operated under the guiding principle that education is the foundation for Missouri's success in a global society. To that end, the Committee was intent on developing a comprehensive, yet focused, strategic plan to identify and prioritize reform initiatives that will shape Missouri's education system through 2020 and beyond.

Vision Statement and Benchmarks

An educated Missouri citizen is a person who is fully able to participate in a democratic society, who has a passion for lifelong learning, and who is prepared with the skills and knowledge necessary to achieve his or her life's goals.

Progress toward this vision will be measured by these benchmarks:

- Missouri's kindergarteners will enter school with the essential skills and knowledge to be successful in their learning.³
- Seventy-five percent of Missouri students in every school district will demonstrate proficiency on the state's standardized achievement measure. In addition, Missouri students will perform at comparable levels to the highest performing industrialized countries on international, standardized measures.
- Missouri will increase attainment of postsecondary degrees and credentials to 60% for all adults, which will be supported in part by an increase in retention rates in higher education.

³ There was not unanimous consensus among the Committee members on this issue. Please see p.7 for the dissenting opinion.

Priorities of the Committee

Through written communication and work sessions, Committee members discussed a full range of issues they felt were critical to education in Missouri. Individual members offered ideas affecting early childhood through higher education, including the need to strengthen the P-20 pipeline and cooperation among stakeholders⁴.

Committee members' ideas for early childhood education included expansion of opportunities and assurances of quality. The Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education concurred with this priority and in a written statement noted their suggestion that "Missouri fund voluntary, universal preschool for three- and four-year-olds... This would be a transformational policy that would pay long-term benefits—educationally, economically, and socially—for our state."⁵

Priorities the Committee noted for K-12 education fell into two primary areas: teacher effectiveness and underperforming schools. Recruitment and retention of high quality teachers, including consideration of merit and differential compensation, was cited as essential for increasing student achievement and building strong schools.

The Committee also formulated ideas for improving provisionally accredited and unaccredited schools, including the need to continue to investigate alternative school models such as virtual schools and charter schools. To support the needs of all students and to lower the dropout rate, the Committee identified potential solutions such as further integration of school, community, and social services. For higher education reform, Committee members emphasized reducing tuition costs to keep higher education accessible to all students so as to ultimately increase the number of young adults who earn a postsecondary degree.

Quick Statistics

| | |
|---|-----|
| Preschoolers in Missouri Preschool Project or Title I Preschool: Kindergarten Preparation Scores** | |
| Above Average | 45% |
| Average | 46% |
| MAP Communication Arts: | |
| Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced | 51% |
| MAP Mathematics: | |
| Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced | 48% |
| High School Graduation Rate | 85% |
| High School Graduates Entering a Four-Year College/University | 37% |
| High School Graduates Entering a Two-Year College/University or Technical School | 29% |
| Postsecondary Graduation Rates:*** | |
| Public Four-Year Colleges/Universities | 61% |
| Public Two-Year Colleges/Universities or Technical Schools* | 22% |

*Preschool data are from 2007-2008; postsecondary graduation rates are from 2008; all other data are from 2009.

**Percentage does not include students receiving special needs services.

***Graduation rates are for all students attending those institutions not for only Missouri public school graduates.

*Not all two-year college students intend to obtain a degree; some will transfer to four-year institutions without completing an associate's degree.

Sources: Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and Missouri Department of Higher Education

⁴ The priorities suggested were offered by one or more Committee members, but not all of the suggestions were unanimously supported by the Committee members.

⁵ There was not unanimous consensus among the Committee members on this issue. Please see p.7 for the dissenting opinion.

Synthesis of Public Testimony

Public hearings were held November 5, 2009, and November 9, 2009, to accept testimony from citizens. (See Appendix B for a list of witnesses.) Witnesses were asked to respond to the following questions:

- What will it mean to be an educated citizen in 2020?
- What will employers need from their employees in 2020?
- What principles (e.g., flexibility, accessibility, and affordability) will anchor our decisions about education in 2020? How do we advance those principles?
- How do we best balance the needs of all Missouri students (P-20)?
- If you could change one thing about education in Missouri, what would it be?

Ideas presented by witnesses at the public hearings or offered in written testimony have been summarized and synthesized.

Core Themes from Public Testimony

Missouri's education system must adhere to principles that will provide a foundation for developing educated citizens through a strong public education system. All children should enter kindergarten ready to learn, and all three- to five-year-olds should have access to universal, voluntary prekindergarten.⁶

As students move forward in their education, the education system must be flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of all learners in an ever-changing environment. This may include different methods of delivering education through such means as online learning or alternative school calendars. As one witness noted, "Missouri should change the structure of schools to reverse the present system in which time is a constant and learning is a variable. It should be just the opposite, with time as the variable and learning as the constant...It would recognize the very real fact that different children learn at different rates. The speed of a child's rate of learning would take a backseat to his or her mastery of knowledge and skills."

Witnesses reiterated the Committee's priority of ensuring the highest quality teachers for Missouri's students. A witness stated, "Missouri's teachers must be world-class if our students are to succeed and compete with those from our neighboring states and around the world."

To maintain a strong system of public higher education, Missouri must be responsive to the changing demographics of students pursuing postsecondary education. The availability of options in higher education and the means to access those options are crucial.

⁶There was not unanimous consensus among the Committee members on this issue. Please see p. 7 for the dissenting opinion.

Finally, strengthening the P-20 pipeline will encourage communication between all levels of the education community and the business sector to ensure that Missouri's schools and institutions are meeting the demands of the workforce both in quality and area of preparation. Communities must support these partnerships and engage in the education of their students. One witness wrote of the various agencies and organizations "involved in the development of plans, policies, priorities, performance measures, and funding decisions impacting aspects of the trained and educated workforce of Missouri. Yet there is no overarching state strategic plan to guide this process of preparing tomorrow's workforce..."

"Missouri can 'advance [core] principles by using research-based information to guide and inform policymakers.'" -- from a witness statement

Urban Education

The school districts serving Missouri's two largest metropolitan areas, St. Louis Public Schools and Kansas City School District, in addition to the charter schools within those districts, educate more than 62,000 students, roughly 7% of Missouri's K-12 enrollment⁷. The urban districts face unique challenges. For example, these districts serve a high percentage of students in poverty⁸. The state average of students receiving free or reduced-price lunch (FRL)⁹ is 43.7%. In the Kansas City School District, the FRL is 79.6%, and in St. Louis Public Schools, 68.7%.

The Committee held a forum in Kansas City in July 2010 to learn more about urban education from community, business, and education leaders. (See Appendix C for a list of presenters and participants.) Several panelists commented on the changes in the Kansas City School District under new governance and administrative leadership citing increased fiscal efficiency and the level of engagement of the community with the school district. As one panelist noted, "Scholars are a product of the community not just a product of the schools."

Another theme which emerged from the meeting was accountability. Panelists encouraged the Committee to maintain high standards of accountability for all schools, including charter schools. Currently charter schools' primary accountability is to their sponsor and is based on standards set in the charter with the schools being closed if the standards are not met. Also mentioned with accountability was having an assessment system which uses a measure of value-added progress.¹⁰

⁷ Source: Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
http://dese.mo.gov/schooldata/school_data.html.

⁸ Socioeconomic status is a variable known to be highly correlated with academic achievement.

⁹ FRL is the standard proxy for poverty in education research.

¹⁰ There are currently two primary models for measuring student achievement growth that are under review and consideration for use by DESE.

Commissioner Nicastro provided the Committee with a statewide context for issues of standards and accountability. Missouri is one of many states that has adopted the national Common Core Standards. DESE is also collaborating with other states in the development of common assessments both as a complement to the Common Core Standards and as a measure of cost savings. Commissioner Nicastro shared DESE's top priorities with the Committee which include early childhood education and effective teaching and leadership. In addition, their aspiration is for Missouri to be a top 10 state in academic performance, and the Committee supports this goal.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Missouri must ensure that all students have the opportunity for high-quality public education at all levels. Re-envisioning education will require a paradigm shift from current expectations. A critical examination of the needs of students; the quality of our teachers, schools, and institutions of higher education; and the demands of the workforce in a 21st century global economy is essential for meeting those objectives.

From the ideas offered through public testimony and the priorities shared by the Educated Citizenry 2020 Committee, the recommendations are offered under five main themes:

- Access
- Accountability
- Teacher Quality
- School Readiness
- Governance

The Committee recommends the following actions to advance the long-range vision for education in Missouri:

Access

Allow all students the opportunity to attend a fully accredited school.

Promote the use of technology in the delivery of education at all levels. Develop a long-term sustainable funding structure which reflects online learning as a key component of the educational delivery system.

Accountability

Hold all schools accountable to high academic standards to support their ability to provide quality educational opportunities for students. Authorize the State Board of Education to enforce sanctions against persistently underperforming charter schools and to revoke charter sponsorship privileges for sponsors not meeting their responsibilities.

Provide access to high-quality charter schools to all Missouri students. Allow any public school district to sponsor a charter school within the district.

Provide support for improvements in urban education. Modify the Kansas City School District Board of Education to a seven-director board of at-large elected members so as to be consistent with all other seven-director boards of Missouri public schools. In addition, set limits of liability on litigation against school districts unless there is gross or intentional neglect of duty.

Eliminate the sharp decline in skills that students from challenging socio-economic areas experience when away from school for long periods of time. Address ways to eliminate this regression. Promote continuous learning opportunities for students through summer school, an extended school day, and/or an extended school year. Create funding options to support these initiatives.

Increase retention rates in higher education institutions. Increase the number of young adults who attain a bachelor's degree or higher. Support a revised funding structure for higher education that places greater emphasis on performance measures. Require that performance data for each institution be submitted annually to the Joint Committee on Education prior to submission of budget requests as referenced in §173.1006, subsection 2.

Teacher Quality

Develop a statewide system for evaluating teacher effectiveness to be used in performance-based compensation. Charge the Joint Committee on Education with leading a taskforce to discuss, review, and develop a statewide system for identifying and rewarding effective teaching. The taskforce will review models used in cities and states throughout the country and frame their work around current research and best practices. Considerations shall include revision of tenure laws that will empower school districts to support the retention of effective teachers and the removal of ineffective teachers. The taskforce may use the Teachers Choice Compensation Plan for St. Louis Public Schools (§168.745-168.750, RSMo.) as a foundation for their discussions. The taskforce will present a comprehensive, cohesive model with specific proposals for legislative action to the General Assembly no later than December 31, 2011.

Recruit and retain high quality teachers in all content areas and for all schools. Permit the use of differentiated pay to meet the demands of the teacher labor market.

School Readiness

Provide parents and early childhood educators with the information they need to see that all children enter kindergarten on par with their peers and ready to learn. Formalize DESE's existing school readiness standards by requiring that standards be distributed to parents, early childhood educators, and school districts. School readiness

assessment data and information on prekindergarten experiences for all kindergartners shall be included in core data reporting requirements.

Advance efforts to support voluntary, universal prekindergarten. Explore potential funding sources for prekindergarten education including federal funding. The Committee would like to note that there was not unanimous support for the prekindergarten recommendations.

Dissenting opinion

There was not unanimous consensus among the committee members (nor the State Board of Education) on the issue of early childhood recommendations because of a lack of constitutional authority or responsibility, growth in government, the inability of the state budget to fund new programs, and also because of ideological differences. Assessment data and information on prekindergarten experiences for all kindergartners cannot be “required” reporting from non-public and home preschools as stated above.

Governance

Require that a seminar on the K-12 foundation formula be mandatory for every newly-elected legislator and available to any legislator at any time.

Require Missouri’s leaders in statewide education governance including but not limited to representatives from the General Assembly, Governor’s Office, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Department of Higher Education, State Board of Education, Coordinating Board for Higher Education, and Coordinating Board for Early Childhood to hold an annual public meeting to discuss education initiatives and progress toward achieving the 2020 benchmarks. Leaders should consider input from a range of stakeholders in education including parents, business and community leaders, and various organizations representing education interests.

Maximize efficient use of school district resources and provide quality educational opportunities to all students. Offer incentives to school districts to increase efficiency through modifications to existing governance structures and through economies of scale. Require school districts to meet DESE resource standards on core and elective course offerings in order to be eligible for the top level of distinction in the Annual Performance Report.

Encourage collaboration between school districts and higher education institutions in efforts to support student learning. Increase students’ opportunities for earning college credit in high school as well as school districts’ ability to staff advanced courses. Create flexibility in teacher certification requirements so that school districts and higher education institutions may have options for instruction of advanced high school courses.

Increase efficiency and maximize resources across Missouri's higher education institutions. Support the directive given to the Department of Higher Education and higher education institutions to review academic programs.

Create a state-level education governance system that spans from prekindergarten through postsecondary education. Propose two constitutional amendments to align the state boards and departments of education. The first would create a single, unified state-level board for P-20 education, and the second would provide the infrastructure to merge the two state education departments into one Department of Education.

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These legislative recommendations should be considered the starting point from which Missouri will begin moving forward. Additional recommendations may be offered as we strive to make our priorities for education a reality.

Appendix A – Committee Meetings and Public Hearings

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| July 1, 2009 | Organizational meeting, Jefferson City |
| August 25, 2009 | Work session with consultant Chris Roberts, Jefferson City |
| November 5, 2009 | Public hearing, Warrensburg |
| November 9, 2009 | Public hearing, St. Louis |
| July 26-27, 2010 | Work session and informational meeting, Kansas City |
| September 15, 2010 | Work session to discuss recommendations, Jefferson City |
| November 10, 2010 | Public hearing to approve final recommendations, St. Louis |

Appendix B – Witnesses Testifying at Public Hearings

November 5, 2009

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Mark James | Metropolitan Community College of Kansas City |
| Deborah Fisher | Missouri Alliance for Arts Education |
| Jay Goff | University of Missouri System |
| Deborah Noble-Triplett | University of Missouri System |
| Valeri Lane | Coordinating Board for Early Childhood |
| Mark Van Zandt | Department of Elementary and Secondary Education |
| Robert Stein | Department of Higher Education |
| Aaron Podolefsky | University of Central Missouri |

November 9, 2009

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Mark Van Zandt | Department of Elementary and Secondary Education |
| Franc Flotron | Missouri Public Charter School Association |
| John Gaal | Joint Labor-Management Training Program |
| Aaron Williams | |
| Carl Peterson | |
| Blair Forlaw | St. Louis RCGA |
| Bertha Gilkey Bonds | Black Alliance for Educational Options |
| Detrice Ray | Black Alliance for Educational Options |
| Maxine Johnson | |
| Christine White | |
| John Scates | |
| Karen Johnson | |
| Daniel Kuschel | Cooperating School Districts of St. Louis |
| Linda Smith | Gifted Association of Missouri |
| Kyna Iman | Gifted Association of Missouri |
| Joseph Knodell | Missouri Education Reform Council |

Appendix C – Presenters and Participants

July 26-27, 2010

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| Stan Archie | State Board of Education |
| Wanda Blanchett | Dean, School of Education, University of Missouri-Kansas City |
| Mike Chesser | Chairman and CEO, Great Plains Energy and Kansas City Power and Light |
| Jeffrey McDaniel | Chief of Staff to Dr. John Covington, Superintendent, Kansas City School District |
| Anthony Moore | Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Kansas City School District |
| Chris Nicastro | Commissioner, Elementary and Secondary Education |
| Airick Leonard West | President, Board of Education, Kansas City School District |